

V. REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Kajinuma (U.S. Patent No. 6,132,258). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Kajinuma discloses an electrical connector assembly that joins two nearly parallel printed circuit boards. The electrical connector includes two complementary connector halves that are secured to opposing surfaces of the printed circuit boards by board mounts secured within cavities of housings of the connector halves. The board mounts of one connector half having contact tabs and the board mounts the other connector half having spring arm contact sections that engage with the contact tabs of the other half when the connector halves are mated. The cavities have portions that extend through the housings with the tabs and the spring arm contact sections disposed in the respective through cavity portions. The spring arm contact sections are arranged in such a manner that they deflect inside the through cavities inside the housings. Each through cavity portion contains a spring arm contact section that includes a support surface engageable therewith during connector mating to prevent plastic deformation of the spring arm contact section.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to an electrical connector that includes first and second connectors which are connectable to each other in a predetermined connecting direction. The first connector includes a housing, a plurality of contacts supported by the housing and a flat metal reinforcement member fixed to the housing and extending in a first direction perpendicular to the connecting direction. The reinforcement member includes a pair of engagement projections projecting in the connection direction. The second connector includes an engagement groove engageable with the reinforcement member. The first and second connectors are permitted to be offset from each other in the first direction intersecting the connecting direction and guided with respect to each other for connection thereof when the pair of engagement projections of the reinforcement member are introduced into the engagement groove.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each element of claim 1 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach a flat metal reinforcement member that includes a pair of engagement projections projecting in the connection direction. By

contrast, the applied art teaches a reinforcement member having either a generally "L" shape configuration or a generally "U" shape configuration with engagement projections that do not project in a connection direction. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 2-5, 9 and 10 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

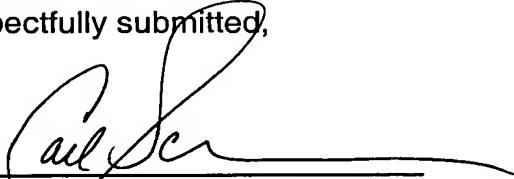
Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


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